

No urea production for 44 days

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Urea production at Shahjalal Fertilizer Company Limited (SFCL) has remained suspended for 44 days due to gas crisis.

On April 23, the production was stopped for an indefinite period, following an order from Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC), said Moinul Islam, managing director of SFCL.

As a result, the factory could not produce 63,800 tonnes of urea, and incurred a loss of around Tk 8.93 crore, he said. Usually, they sell the fertiliser at Tk 1,400 per tonne.

Moreover, other expenditures such as administrative and maintenance costs continue to add to the loss, he added.

Before production stopped, the factory, with a production capacity of 1,760 tonnes per day, was producing 1,450 tonnes of urea daily.

“BCIC ordered us to stop the production as we weren't getting sufficient gas from Jalalabad Gas T&D System Limited,” he said. “We hope things will go back to normal after Eid,” he added.

With an annual production target of 5.81 lakh tonnes of urea, the China-Bangladesh joint investment factory started operating from 2016 at Fenchuganj upazila in Sylhet.

According to SFCL officials, urea production has stopped several times due to various issues there, including gas crisis. Last year, the factory incurred a loss of Tk 218 crore.

Contacted, Shahidul Islam, general manager of Jalalabad Gas T&D System Limited, said the pressure of gas supply to the factory was reduced following a government request. “It will be back to normal once we get an order in this regard,” he added.

He did not elaborate any further.